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Wednesday, February 8, 2017 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

OUR EAGLES WISH LIST

A look at what the Birds need to do this offseason. 18-19.

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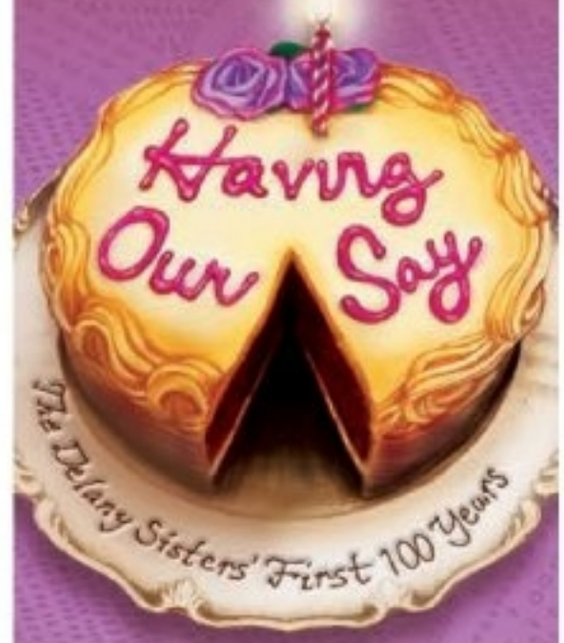
A BLIGHT IDEA

A nonprofit is recycling construction materials from abandoned homes and buildings. 6

CHARLES MOSTOLLER

CELEBRATE THE STORY OF A CENTURY.



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TRUMP SAYS TRAVEL BAN IS KEY FOR SECURITY

1 President Donald Trump cast his travel ban on people from seven Muslim-majority countries as a key element of national security, hours before a federal appeals court is set to consider his most divisive action since taking office last month. The Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco is to hear arguments later in the day from Justice Department lawyers and opposing attorneys

for the states of Washington and Minnesota about whether to restore the ban. "I actually can't believe that we're having to fight to protect the security, in a court system, to protect the security of our nation," Trump said at an event with sheriffs at the White House on Tuesday. REUTERS

ARMY TO GRANT FINAL PERMIT FOR PIPELINE

2 A The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will grant the final easement needed to finish the controversial Dakota Access Pipeline. The line had been delayed for several months after protests from Native American tribes and climate activists. The $3.8 billion line, which is being built by Energy Transfer Partners needed a final permit to tunnel under Lake Oahe, a reservoir that is part of the Missouri River. The Standing Rock Sioux tribe, whose reservation is adjacent to the line's route, has said it will fight the decision. The Army Corps had previously stated that it would undertake further environmental review of the project. The 1,170-mile line will bring crude oil from North Dakota's Bakken shale region to Patoka, Illinois, and from there connect to the Gulf of Mexico, where many U.S. refineries are located. REUTERS

'THIS-YEAR PRIORITY': REVAMPING DODD-FRANK

3 The chairman of the U.S. Financial Services Committee told CNBC on Tuesday that revamping the 2010 Dodd-Frank Wall Street reform law remained a "this-year priority" for President Donald Trump, Vice President Mike Pence and House Speaker Paul Ryan. Republican Rep. Jeb Hensarling said he would soon reintroduce his legislation that gives banks a choice between

complying with Dodd-Frank and holding more capital. While the bill is expected to easily pass the Republican-led House, it will face resistance in the Senate, where Democrats hold enough seats to filibuster. Pence can cast votes to break ties on legislation. REUTERS

TORNADOES RIP THROUGH NEW ORLEANS, 25 INJURED

5 A police officer walks through a damaged gas station along Chef Menture Avenue after a tornado touched down in the eastern part of New Orleans on Tuesday. According to the weather service, 25 people were injured in the aftermath of the tornado. PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

A WOMAN HOLDS DOGS BY A MAKESHIFT LEASH AMONG THE DEBRIS LEFT BEHIND BY A TORNADO.

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

SYRIA EXECUTES 13,000 AT MILITARY PRISON

4 The Syrian government executed up to 13,000 prisoners in mass hangings and carried out systematic torture at a military jail near Damascus, rights watchdog Amnesty International said. Amnesty said the executions took place between 2011 and 2015, but were probably still being carried out and amounted to war crimes. It called for a further investigation by the United Nations, which produced a report last year with similar accusations also based on extensive witness testimonies. Syria's government and President Bashar al-Assad have rejected similar reports in the past of torture and extrajudicial killings in a civil war that has claimed hundreds of thousands of lives. The Amnesty report said an average of 20 to 50 people were hanged each week at the Sednaya military prison north of Damascus. REUTERS

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CRISTABELLE TUMOLA, WEB EDITOR

Politics aside, Barack Obama is the only president cool enough to pull this off. Still enjoying some much needed R & R, Obama and his wife Michelle, like every famous person, decided to stop by the British Virgin Islands to visit Richard Branson. And like any former president and billionaire, they decided to duke it out on the water over kitesurfing and foilboarding. **Visit metro.us/viral** to watch what happens.

PLAY TO WIN

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Every Monday, we pick a random winner from the participants who answered correctly one of the quizzes from the previous week. Congrats to last week's winner, **Mary Chapman from Philadelphia.**

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2009 Cadillac Escalade AWD

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2012 Buick LaCrosse CXL

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2013 Nissan Pathfinder SV

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SLASH

Pennsylvania governor seeks $2 billion of cuts in proposed budget

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf on Tuesday proposed a $32.3 billion state budget for fiscal 2018 that seeks to reduce an estimated $3 billion structural deficit through $2 billion in spending cuts and $1 billion in revenue enhancements.

His plan would not, however, raise the personal income or state sales taxes, proposals in his previous budget addresses that failed after resistance from the Republican-controlled legislature.

"I'm offering a budget proposal that represents a responsible solution to our deficit challenge, and a different approach from the way things have been done in Harrisburg for almost a generation," said Wolf, a Democrat, in his address to the legislature.

His revenue enhancements include a removal of special interest exemptions to the sales tax, including for premade airplane meals sold to airlines, aircraft maintenance and repair, and business storage.

Wolf also hopes to get $200 million from a leaseback deal for the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex & Expo Center in Harrisburg.

Cuts target different areas, including a $31 million annual appropriation for the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine and $50 million of student transportation reimbursements made possible by lower gas prices.

Combining four state agencies into the Department of Health and Human Services will save another $91 million.

Republicans said they appreciated Wolf's attention to cutting costs but questioned proposals for one-time revenues and the apparent lack of solutions for the state's underfunded public pension system, growth in Medicaid spending and long-term spending.

"This proposed budget falls short of addressing the real issues in state government," said Senate Majority Leader Jake Corman in a statement. **REUTERS**

Former Vice President Joe Biden **GETTY IMAGES**

Former VP Joe Biden joins the faculty at UPenn

Biden will lead the new Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy.

SAM NEWHOUSE
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sam.newhouse@metro.us

Former Vice President Joe Biden has accepted a position on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, the school announced Tuesday.

Biden will lead the new Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement, and will be the Benjamin Franklin Presidential Practice Professor.

UPenn president Amy Gutmann called Biden "one of the greatest statesmen of our time."

In a statement, Biden said he looks "forward to building on the work that has been a central pillar of my career in public office: promoting and protecting the post-WWII international order that keeps the United States safe and strong."

Biden, a Scranton native, will have an office at UPenn in West Philly, and will also teach in the communications and business schools at UPenn.

Biden's late son, Beau, daughter Ashley, and granddaughter Naomi all graduated from UPenn.

Biden served as former President Barack Obama's vice president for two terms, and before that, was U.S. senator from Delaware from 1973 to 2009.

In addition to the UPenn position, Biden will also serve as founding chairman of the Biden Institute at the University of Delaware.

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2015 Hyundai Accent

$177/Month

2012 Volkswagen CC Sport

$209/Month

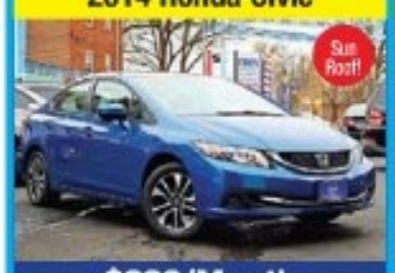
2014 Nissan Sentra SV

$209/Month

2008 Lincoln MKX AWD

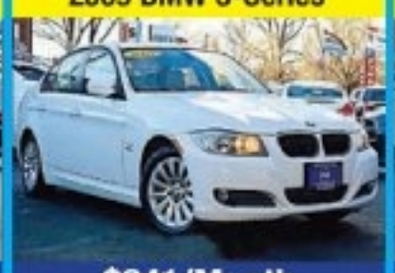
$226/Month

2014 Honda Civic



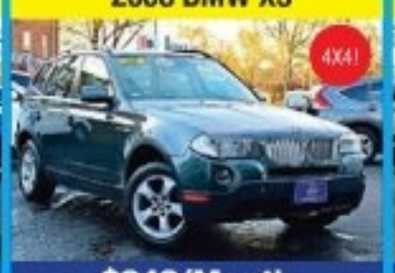
$226/Month

2009 BMW 3-Series



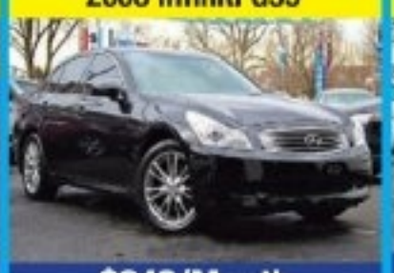
$241/Month

2008 BMW X3



$242/Month

2008 Infiniti G35



$242/Month

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$242/Month

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$290/Month

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2009 Acura MDX

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2013 Nissan Quest

$307/Month

2014 Nissan Altima

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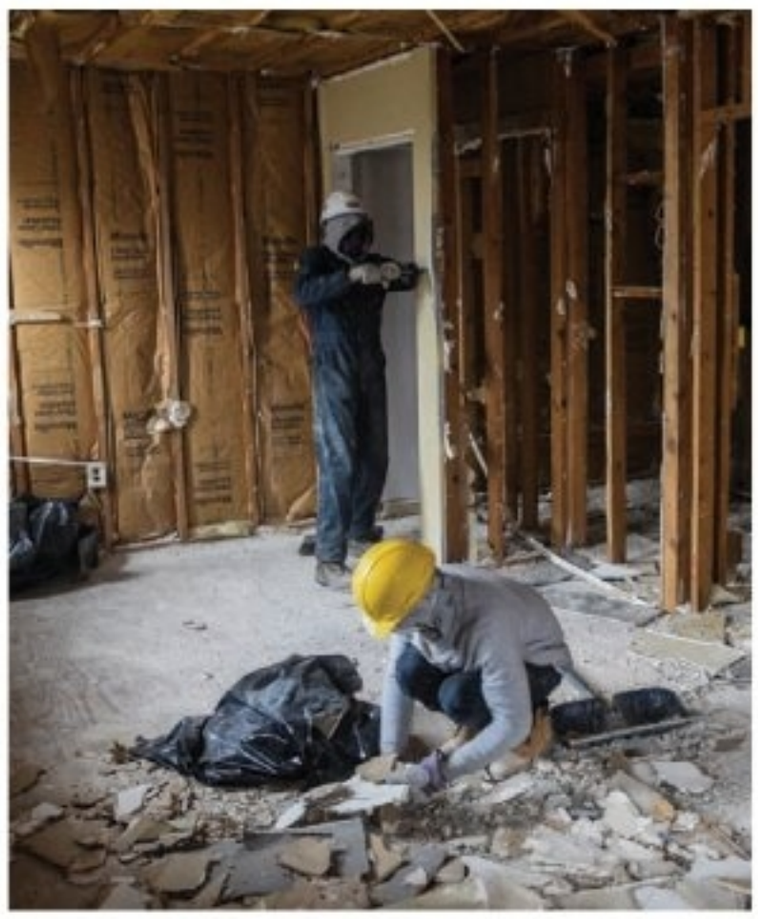
Members of the Philadelphia Community Corps work on a demo job in South Philadelphia. ALL IMAGES CHARLES MOSTOLLER



Seeing a future beyond the blight

Growing nonprofit harvests construction materials from vacant buildings.

SAM NEWHOUSE
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After working in Hurricane Katrina disaster relief, where 134,000 homes in New Orleans were destroyed, Greg Trainor came to Philly for college. He looked around at the roughly 40,000 vacant homes in Philadelphia and saw that the situation wasn't all that different.

"I realized Philadelphia is a disaster zone," Trainor said. "A man-made disaster zone that happened over time."

Looking back, Trainor says that was the moment he first had the inspiration for his nonprofit, Philadelphia Community Corps (PCC), which he sees as a potential strategy to eradicate Philly's blight problem.

"If a disaster destroyed 40,000 houses in Philadelphia, everyone would rush to fix it," Trainor said. "But because it happened so gradually, everybody just got used to it, and said that's the way Philly is. … It's so shameful, the whole idea that nothing can be done about it."

PCC takes on projects stripping old properties of reusable construction materials and recycling them. Those materials are sold off at PCC's building material reuse center in Kensington. Property owners who utilize PCC can treat whatever materials get recycled as a tax-deductible donation.

PCC is also a job-training program for youths who earn a paycheck while getting experience in basic demolition skills.

Trainor hopes that if the nonprofit expands he'll be able to offer them more work, and he thinks the deconstruction and recycling industry has a bright future in cities across the country with large deindustrialized areas.

If enough people catch on to the benefits of reclaiming blighted land and recycling old structures, PCC's work could help change the face of the city, he said.

"Let's fight," Trainor said. "Let's be the generation where Philadelphia says, 'Let's make a push for it. Let's get rid of the abandoned houses.'"

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Firefighters watch as smoke rises from the site of the World Trade Center collapse Sept. 11, 2001 in New York City GETTY IMAGES

US accuses firm of scamming 9/11 heroes and NFL retirees

A company that advances money to people awaiting settlement payouts was accused by New York and federal regulators of scamming sick responders to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, as well as National Football League retirees with brain injuries.

RD Legal Funding LLC and founder Roni Dersovitz allegedly cheated victims out of millions of dollars by deceiving them about the terms of the advances, according to a lawsuit filed on Tuesday by the U.S. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the office of New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman.

Victims of the Cresskill, New Jersey-based company allegedly included firefighters, police officers and other 9/11 first responders suffering from cancer, other respiratory illnesses, stress and depression.

They also allegedly included former NFL players suffering from Alzheimer's disease, dementia and other illnesses tied to head trauma, entitling them to money from the league's estimated $1 billion class-action concussion settlement in 2015.

According to the lawsuit filed in Manhattan federal court, victims often ended up repaying more than double what they received upfront, at interest rates that could top 250 percent.

"RD Legal scammed 9/11 heroes and NFL concussion victims out of millions of dollars," CFPB Director Richard Cordray said in a statement. "Our lawsuit seeks to end this illegal scheme and get money back to those entitled to receive it."

David Willingham, a lawyer for RD, in an email called the allegations "outrageous and without merit."

RD "did nothing more than provide immediate liquidity — in the form of an arm's length transaction — to people who voluntarily sought the benefits of early funding," he said.

Dersovitz was not immediately available for comment.

Regulators said RD would contact 9/11 first responders after learning they were eligible for the Zadroga Fund, set up by Congress to assist with medical costs and lost income, and promise to "cut through red tape" to get them paid faster.

But the cost was high, regulators said. In one case, they said a female first responder who received an $18,590 advance ended up repaying $33,800 a mere six months later. REUTERS

HIGHER LEARNING

Mayor: San Francisco to offer free community college to residents

San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee said on Tuesday the city would become the first in the United States to offer tuition-free community college to its residents, framing the move as a way of helping to narrow wealth inequality in the city.

The $5.4 million plan also includes $500 grants to low-income City College of San Francisco students to spend on books, transportation, school supplies and healthcare, Lee said in a posting on online publishing site Medium.com. Grants of $200 would also be made available to poor part-time students, he said.

"At a time when the political rhetoric is punishing those who are less fortunate, San Francisco has again united around our values and taken the national lead on this important issue of equality," Lee said.

The mayor's office did not return a call for comment beyond the posting.

The college charges $46 per unit, according to its website. The plan is to take effect in the fall.

San Francisco Supervisor Jane Kim spearheaded the initiative. Kim was endorsed last year by U.S. Senator and presidential candidate Bernie Sanders in her unsuccessful state senate bid.

Both she and Sanders ran campaigns that focused in part on dealing with the crisis of student debt, which totals more than $1 trillion in the United States.

During a news conference on Monday, Kim said San Francisco has "the fastest growing income gap of any city across the nation," citing research from the Brookings Institute.

"We as politicians, as policymakers are responsible for at least trying to reverse those trends. And one of the best ways we can do that is investing in our citizens," she said. REUTERS

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DeVos confirmed as education secretary in unprecedented vote

Betsy DeVos participates in a swearing-in ceremony, officiated by Vice President Mike Pence. GETTY IMAGES

Two Republican senators and two independent senators joined Democrats to force a tie-breaking vote by the vice president.

President Donald Trump's choice of billionaire Betsy DeVos to be education secretary was confirmed Tuesday by the Senate, but only after Vice President Mike Pence was called in to break a tie that threatened to defeat her.

The tie-breaking vote, which Senate officials said was unprecedented to confirm a Cabinet nominee, followed an all-night debate on DeVos as Democrats tried to pressure at least one more Republican to oppose her and defeat the nomination.

Only two Republicans joined the 46 Democrats and two independents in opposition to DeVos. Critics have called her unprepared to lead the Department of Education after a rocky Senate confirmation hearing.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer immediately derided the proceeding.

"This cabinet nom is so unqualified, so divisive, that @MikePenceVP had to drive down Pennsylvania Ave to cast the deciding vote," he wrote in a Twitter post after the vote.

Under the Constitution, the vice president also serves as president of the Senate, with the power to cast votes only when there are ties on nominations or legislation.

Trump tweeted his congratulations to the nominee and Pence praised her. "Today's vote to confirm Education Secretary @BetsyDeVos was a vote for every child having a chance at a world-class education," the vice president wrote in a Twitter post.

Ultimately, only Republican Sens Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska joined the Democrats and two independents in opposition to DeVos. That left 50 Republicans supporting her in the 100-member chamber.

Historically, Cabinet nominees with weak support in the Senate ask the president to withdraw their nomination, which DeVos did not do.

DeVos is married to the heir and former chief executive of Amway, which sells household and personal care items. She is also the daughter of the founders of Prince Corp., a Michigan car parts supplier, and sister of Erik Prince, the founder of the security company formerly known as Blackwater USA, now called Academi.

As Monday night's debate wound down, Schumer said of DeVos: "She disdains public education where 90 percent of our students are."

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, urging her confirmation, said it was time to "end the unprecedented delay by Democrats" on the cabinet nominations by Trump. REUTERS

"She disdains public education where 90 percent of our students are."
Chuck Schumer

Donald Trump Jr. takes over Washington hotel near White House

A filing with the District of Columbia government last week showed that the younger Trump took over as president of the company that runs the luxury hotel as well as a restaurant and spa in the building.

The Trump International Hotel in Washington D.C. GETTY IMAGES

Donald Trump Jr. has taken the reins of the Trump International Hotel near the White House after critics charged it was a conflict of interest for U.S. President Donald Trump to run the hotel while also running the federal government that is leasing the building to his company.

The filing left unresolved a controversy about Trump's leasing the Old Post Office, the historic government building that houses the hotel. Democrats have criticized the lease as a conflict of interest, and the agreement also has come under scrutiny from Representative Jason Chaffetz, the Utah Republican who heads the House of Representatives' Oversight Committee.

Chaffetz met Trump at the White House on Tuesday, and a spokesman for Chaffetz said they spoke about the lawmaker's reform agenda, including civil service and postal reforms.

Democratic lawmakers have said conflict-of-interest laws prohibit Trump, as president, from being both landlord and tenant of the hotel a few blocks from the White House.

They have asked the General Services Administration, which oversees federal property, to clarify the status of the lease arrangement.

The agency did not respond to a request for comment, but a spokesman for Representative Elijah Cummings of Maryland, ranking Democrat on the Oversight Committee, said the GSA has told the lawmaker it was still evaluating whether Trump was in violation of the lease.

The hotel lease held by Trump Old Post Office LLC includes a standard provision barring members of Congress or other elected federal officials such as the president from having any part of it. Trump is the company's majority owner.

The Trump International Hotel has become a rallying point for anti-Trump protesters since it opened in September. Trump said last month he would keep ownership of his global business empire but hand over control to his two eldest sons, Donald Jr. and Eric.

Watchdogs have said the arrangement would not prevent conflicts of interest in the White House. REUTERS

CABINET PROBLEM

Trump's pick for labor secretary admits to employing undocumented immigrant

President Donald Trump's choice to lead the Labor Department admitted to employing an undocumented immigrant as a house cleaner, the kind of revelation that derailed Cabinet nominees in previous administrations.

Andrew Puzder, chief executive officer of CKE Restaurants Inc., is one of several Trump nominees who face strong opposition from Senate Democrats and progressive groups.

In a statement late on Monday, Puzder said he and his wife had employed a housekeeper for a few years without being aware that she was not legally permitted to work in the United States.

"When I learned of her status, we immediately ended her employment and offered her assistance in getting legal status," he said in the statement. He said he paid back taxes for employing the maid to the U.S. Internal Revenue Service and to California.

The statement was first reported by the Huffington Post.

Sen. Lamar Alexander, chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, the panel that will vet Puzder's nomination, said in a statement that Puzder had reported his mistake and voluntarily corrected it.

"I do not believe that this should disqualify him from being a cabinet secretary," he added.

The disclosure came as Senate Democrats held an all-night session in a final attempt to block the nomination of Betsy DeVos, the billionaire school-choice champion whom Trump nominated to be education secretary.

Puzder's tentative date for a confirmation hearing has been repeatedly postponed, as the committee awaited completion of an ethics review by the Office of Government Ethics.

As of Tuesday, the committee had still not received any of the necessary paperwork on Puzder's nomination, though the Federal Bureau of Investigation background check had been completed, according to a committee aide. REUTERS

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Tornadoes tear path of destruction through Louisiana

Six tornadoes tore through New Orleans and other parts of Louisiana on Tuesday, injuring at least 25 people as the storm roared across highways and streets, leveling trees, power lines and homes. Governor John Bel Edwards declared a state of emergency throughout Louisiana, while search and rescue teams scoured the landscape for survivors. "The width of the devastation was unlike any that I have seen before," Edwards told a news conference. "When you see it from the air you're even more impressed that so few people were injured and that nobody's life was lost." The Louisiana National Guard said it was conducting search-and-rescue operations, looking for injured people who may be stranded, and assessing damage.

REUTERS, ALL PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES

A woman looks at the wreckage caused by a tornado which touched down along Chef Menteur Avenue in New Orleans.

Cars are covered with bricks in New Orleans.

A dog stands in debris left behind by a tornado in New Orleans.

A man walks through the debris of what was a motel on Chef Menteur Ave.

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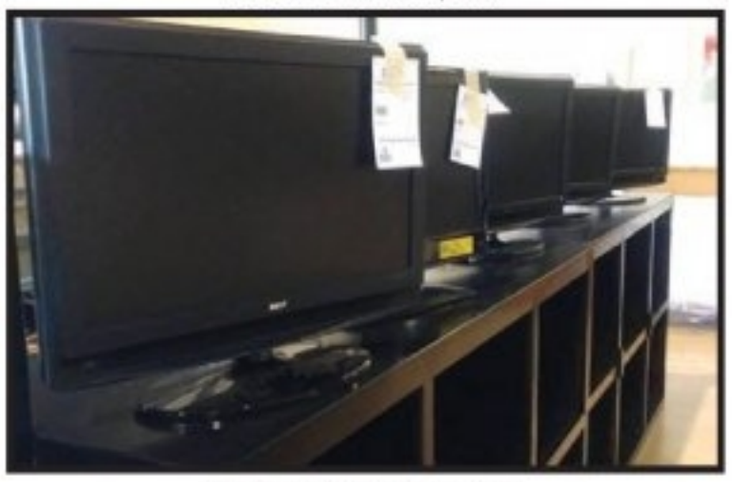

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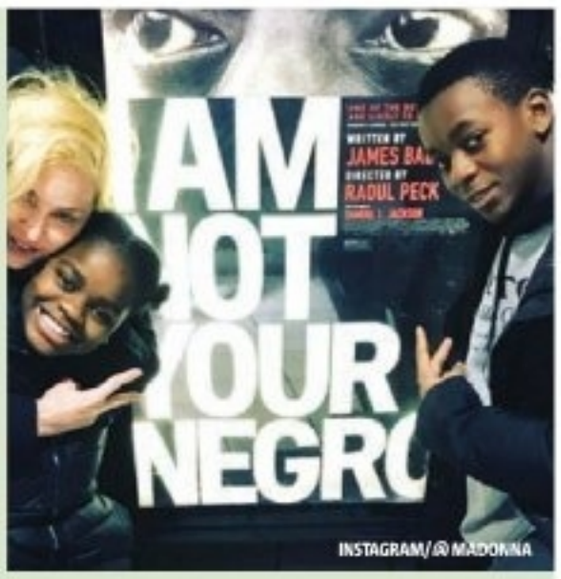

INSTAGRAM/@MADONNA

Madonna adopts twin girls from Malawi

Madonna just added two new baby girls to her brood.

The 58-year-old singer has adopted 4-year-old twins from Malawi, according to Yahoo News. The toddlers are from the Home of Hope orphanage in Mchinji.

A couple of weeks ago, Madonna denied that she was adopting, insisting that she was only in Malawi to check in on her foundation, Raising Malawi. But I guess she just didn't want the press in her business, which honestly is a new move for the pop star. Y'all know how Madonna is always trying to start something. Remember her speech at the Women's March?

This, of course, isn't the first time she's adopted from Malawi. The two toddlers will join Madonna's adopted son David and daughter Mercy James, both age 11 and adopted in 2008 and 2009, respectively. She also has a 16-year-old son, Rocco, with ex-husband Guy Ritchie, and 20-year-old daughter Lourdes with ex Carlos Leon.

That's a whole lot of kids for a woman pushing 60. Good luck, girl.

Lena Dunham is on a Trump diet

Another day, another ignorant pull quote from y'all's fave.

Many people have noticed that Lena Dunham has recently lost some weight. She went on Howard Stern and revealed it's just part of the Trump diet she's been on these last few months.

According to People, The "Girls" creator and star stopped by Stern to drop some of her anecdotes that we all know and love so very much.

"Donald Trump became president and I stopped being able to eat food," explained the 30-year-old. "Everyone's been asking like, 'What have you been doing?' And I'm like, 'Try soul-crushing pain and devastation and hopelessness and you, too, will lose weight.'"

Ah, classic Dunham. I cherish her ability to make everything about her. Her chronic narcissism is just one of those things I can rely on in these trying times.

the word

RACHAEL CLEMMONS
@rachaelclemz

ALL PHOTOS GETTY UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

Gigi Hadid accused of racism

They say ignorance is bliss. But honestly? Ignorance is just ignorance.

Over the weekend, Bella Hadid shared a video of sister Gigi that some people — including me — are quite offended by. In the video, 21-year-old Gigi is shown giggling and squinting at a birthday dinner, holding up a cookie with a Buddha's face on it.

Bella quickly deleted the post, which should tell you something, but we all know that nothing on the internet ever dies.

In Gigi's head, to be fair, I'm sure she's not thinking about how she's mocking an entire race for her own benefit. She's just hanging out with her girls, having a good time, basking in her ignorance! You know, just being a cool kid or whatever.

Us Weekly notes that Twitter wasn't so kind to Gigi, with many people calling the video disrespectful, offensive and racist.

Then for some reason Gigi's mother, "Real Housewives of Beverly Hills" star Yolanda Foster, came to her defense, proving that ignorance is just a cool trait that runs in the family.

"Only a toxic mind will perceive hugging a chocolate laughing Buddha as racist..... #PracticeHappiness #PracticeKindness," Foster wrote on Twitter.

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Christie Brinkley stuns in the SI Swimsuit Issue

Christie Brinkley posed for the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue, and she looks fantastic. Sports Illustrated posted the gorgeous photo on Instagram, saying "Christie Brinkley is BACK in SI Swimsuit ... and this time she's bringing her daughters!"

In the post, the 63-year-old model poses alongside daughters Alexa Ray Joel and Sailor Brinkley Cook in a black mesh one-piece.

What an insanely genetically blessed family. May we all hope to look this dang good in a flimsy bikini made out of basketball netting at age 63 as Christie Brinkley. It's probably not going to happen, but a girl can dream.

Rosie O'Donnell volunteers to play Steve Bannon on 'SNL'

Comedian Rosie O'Donnell took to Twitter to let her fans know she's willing and able. "I am here to serve — Alec has Trump — Melissa has Spice — I would need a few days to prepare — so if called — I will be ready," she wrote. Not sure what all of those dashes are about, but I guess you don't need to be able to write proper sentences to play Steve Bannon anyway. The former "View" host seems to have been inspired by Melissa McCarthy's portrayal of press secretary Sean Spicer on "SNL." And it probably helps that she and Donald Trump have been in an epic feud for decades. According to Entertainment Weekly, Trump famously insulted O'Donnell during the Republican debates, and in 2006 called her "a woman out of control." Sigh. Trump was silent after last week's "SNL," but if O'Donnell visits Studio 8H, I am very sure he'll have something to say.

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Common fights Keanu Reeves in "John Wick: Chapter 2." NIKO TAVERNISE

Common wants balance

The rapper-actor talks about working on the fun "John Wick" and the serious "13th."

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On his albums, Common is compassionate, thoughtful, gentle. In "John Wick: Chapter 2" he's a brutal, fearsome killer. The rapper-actor contains multitudes; just witness the two fight scenes he has with Keanu Reeves. The latter returns as the super-assassin reluctantly lured out of retirement. This time, John Wick is pursued by most of NYC's killers for hire, including one played by Common. But making the sequel wasn't only about pain; Common got to go to Italy, learn a little Italian, as well as shoot in New York, his favorite city in the world — no knock on his hometown of Chicago, his "most enduring and loved city," he tells us.

Your two big fights are intense, especially since they're the toughest ones you've ever done on-screen before.

I'm happy to do it. My first conversation with Chad Stahelski [the director], I said, "I want to be the Muhammad Ali of this. I want to be one of the greats." I mean, I won't be the greatest. But when it comes to fighting in films, I want to be high level.

Among other things, this movie offers a great escape from the world, even if you know you have to return to it.

I was talking to someone who said, "Some days I want to change the world, and some days I want to escape from the world." I feel that, too. If "John Wick: Chapter 2" will let me escape, and will be fun and of high quality, that's what I want to see.

Experts are talking about the importance of unplugging now and then, allowing your brain to rest from the news.

Exactly. It's like anything in life: You don't want to overload. You can take it in, then you go other places. Some days you need to be outside and enjoy things, and other days you have to go into the office and handle your business.

I'm grateful to be a part of "John Wick: Chapter 2," but I'm also grateful to be a part of "13th."

GETTY IMAGES

That would make a good double feature: Go see escapist fun, then go on Netflix and watch

The future

Are there any kinds of roles in particularly you're looking for?

I'm definitely looking for dynamic characters, powerful characters that have many sides to them. I'm also open to playing superheroes, though they'd have to have some soul to them, some depth. I'm open to play someone real, like Gil Scott-Heron, who was a musician who was conflicted, or a lawyer who's dealing with lots of different things. I like to show the range and dynamics of who we are as humans.

I would love to see a Gil Scott-Heron film.

I'm producing films now, and that's one I'd love to do.

Would you play him as well?

I would love to play him. "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised," "The Bottle," "We Almost Lost Detroit" — these are songs that have impacted me. His voice has meant something to me as an artist. He was a beautiful human being who had his own fallacies he was battling. I have my own issues I fight with. Everyone does.

Ava DuVernay's documentary about history you might not know.

Yeah, man. That's what helps us become well-rounded individuals. None of us can be serious all the time, or party all the time. I love to take on roles like this because it gives me a chance to show the diaspora of who I am, the depths of who I am as an actor. I'm looking for even greater roles, to show more aspects of myself.

Andrew Rannells plays Elijah, Hannah's gay ex-boyfriend and current roommate/bestie on "Girls." CRAIG BLANKENHORN/HBO

He thinks he's the star of 'Girls'

Andrew Rannells on Elijah's disarming ego.

KATE MOONEY
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Elijah is, low-key, our favorite character on "Girls." Played by acclaimed Broadway actor Andrew Rannells ("Book of Mormon," "Hamilton," "Falsettos"), Hannah's gay ex-boyfriend and current roommate/bestie provides much-needed comic relief and a respite from the girls' drama.

The 38-year-old actor, who lives in New York City by way of Omaha, Nebraska, talks with us ahead of "Girls" final season (starting Sunday, Feb. 12).

So, Elijah got his heart broken at the end of last season.

Majorly. We left him in not the best place. He was getting drunk with Loreen [Hannah's mom, played by Becky Ann Baker] on the street. Maybe not his finest moment.

I was very proud of that storyline, and that Corey Stoll joined us for it, because it was really nice to show that side of Elijah, that he does aspire to have more, to have a relationship.

The Elijah-Hannah dynamic avoids the gay best friend trope.

I never felt like I was her sidekick. She always made Elijah feel like he was the star of the show. So, in playing him, I very much felt like I didn't have to just be the sassy friend. I think in Elijah's mind, "Girls" is about him. He feels like this is his show. If you were to ask him, he'd be like, "Well, I am the lead of 'Girls' and all these girls operate around me." And that's how they wrote it. Every scene he's in, he's taking charge and being an a—hole.

Any favorite episodes?

My favorite, selfishly, was getting to do cocaine off a toilet seat with Lena [Season 2, Episode 3, "Bad Friend"]. That whole experience, Lena and I getting to run around the city and act like idiots, and do fake cocaine.

How do you do "fake cocaine"?

It was vitamin B powder. I do remember there was a weird placebo effect of lining it up and doing it. And because it was vitamin B, you'd get a little rush from it. We did start to feel high at a certain point. It was silly fun.

Who is Corey Stoll's character Dill Harcourt based on?

He's a version of a lot of people. For me, I certainly dated people in my mid-20s who were just a little out of reach, but I thought I was ready for it, but I couldn't quite do it. I feel like a lot of people have that guy in their past. Their Mr. Big. Dill Harcourt was Elijah's Mr. Big.

That would fit with Elijah's delusion that he's the star of "Girls."

Yep, he's Carrie. It's less that he's the Hannah. I think he thinks that he's Carrie Bradshaw. [Laughs]

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The Opening Corks event last year featured some bubbly. PROVIDED

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Co-founder Kate Moroney Miller says in a press release:

"All of us at Philly Wine Week are looking to change the perception of wine as something complicated, stuffy and only to be enjoyed on special occasions. And what better place to show how unfussy something is than our very own city, where keeping things casual and unpretentious is the way of life."

Tickets are now on sale at phillywineweek.org.

The popular Opening Corks event kicks off the week of wine at the Academy of Natural Sciences, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, from 6-9 p.m. on Sunday, March 19.

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ALEXIS SACHDEV
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I'm not a modern kind of gal.

When boyfriend and I stroll our neighborhood, he consistently points to blocky and gaudy newly constructed apartments, with second floor windows that push out beyond the facade. In South Philly, these are becoming too frequent a sight. Typically I'll groan, "That's not what the city is about!"

Give me charming colonials, Queen Village trinities and double-wide mansions in West Philly with wraparound porches.

That is, until I found this Graduate Hospital townhome that brings together the best of both worlds for **$795,000**.

The exterior of **2138 Catharine St.** is perfect for the modern eye. Its oversized windows and clean lines bring in plenty of sunlight and stand out among the classic South Philly homes on this charming tree-lined street.

But the interior's architectural elements — like exposed wood ceiling beams, exposed white-washed brick walls and muted hardwood floors throughout — are a rarity in much of the modern construction that's going up throughout the city.

Cozy up by the fire in the quaint living room, or head through the open floor plan into a chef's kitchen. The custom room boasts of a built-in Sub Zero fridge and dishwasher, hand-crafted cabinetry, granite countertops and a large island, offering plenty of space for entertaining family and friends.

On the second floor, there are two bedrooms, a half-bath and a laundry area, as well as a bilevel deck for morning coffee breaks and al fresco dinners in the summer.

The master suite overtakes the third floor, with a tranquil bathroom in white marble — including a separate shower, soaking tub and oversized vanity.

Not like you'd ever want to leave, but this stunning three bedroom home is just steps from Rittenhouse and GHo's nightlife and convenience. With a one-car garage, you'll never have to worry about parking, either.

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Eagles 2017 offseason to-do list

If the Eagles want to contend in 2017, they better check off some of these boxes.

LUKE MILLER
@LukeFM7
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The 2016 season is officially over, closed with one of the most memorable Super Bowls in recent history. If the Eagles' goal is to be providing similar drama in the near future, we think following this shopping list is a pretty good start.

☐ Sign Alshon Jeffery

Don't just get Carson Wentz a weapon, get Carson Wentz the best weapon available. Don't just reunite new receivers coach Dave Groh with a former player, reunite him with his best former wideout. Money is a hurdle, but we won't bet against Howie Roseman finessing his cap to anything the Eagles need (more on that later).

Of course, free agency is a two way street and if the Eagles can't bring Jeffery to town, they need to find a capable starter elsewhere. That could be DeSean Jackson; it could be Miami's Kenny Stills, or someone else. What's important is that the Eagles don't enter the draft with no security beyond Jordan Matthews at the position. That would be begging to overdraft someone based on need. Also, unlike say cornerback, the Eagles don't actually have a terrible track record when turning to free agency for agency at wide receiver. And this class features exactly what the Eagles need: deep threats.

We're all familiar with Jackson's particular talent for this, but he's actually gotten better at it since leaving the Eagles: His three seasons in Washington have been three of his five best in terms of yards per catch. He has 22 receptions of 40-plus yards in those three seasons and averaged 19 YPC total over that span. Stills had four 40-plus receptions in 2016. The Eagles receivers combined for four total. In four seasons, Stills has 18 total, Jeffery 17 in five seasons.

Alshon Jeffery would bring veteran leadership and deep ball ability to the Eagles wide receivers room. ALL PHOTO GETTY IMAGES

☐ Draft cornerbacks

You know the Eagles need to improve at cornerback. We know the Eagles need to improve at cornerback. Fingers crossed they know the Eagles need to improve at cornerback. We won't rehash this here beyond this: Pro Football Focus ranked the Eagles secondary dead last in the NFL despite rating the safety play above average in 2016.

With signings like Byron Maxwell and Nnamdi Asomugha obscuring any good vibes about the free

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agent market brought on by memories of Asante Samuel and Troy Vincent, it makes sense for this to be the position the Eagles try to fill during the draft. Eric Rowe was the highest draft pick the Eagles spent on a cornerback since Lito Sheppard, and he just got a Super Bowl ring two days later.

The class is so deep they should be able to find an immediate upgrade even on day two, and their need is so great that if they take one in round one and see one they still like available when their name comes up again, no one will complain.

Coach up those cornerbacks

Let's go back to that Rowe Super Bowl victory for a second. This offseason, after one largely positively reviewed season in midnight green, the new-old regime sent Rowe to New England for a fourth round pick. Next to him in the New England secondary, you may notice Patrick Chung, collecting his second ring.

You might notice Nate Allen starting games for the 12-4 Raiders, or perhaps you caught Kurt Coleman's seven interceptions for the Super Bowl runner-up Panthers in 2015. Byron Maxwell improved in Miami this season, and Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie was one of the NFL's best cornerbacks for the Giants.

As much as talent evaluation has hindered the Eagles in recent years, more often than not the Eagles' trash has proven to be other (often more successful) teams' treasure. Scheme and surrounding talent are the usual culprits, but it all comes down to putting players in a position to succeed, something the Eagles clearly haven't been doing.

Assistant secondary coach Dino Vasso, whom Doug Pederson brought with him from Kansas City, was on the coaching staff for the East-West Shrine game. Hopefully he saw some players he could work with.

Fully embrace youth

This isn't about tanking or rebuilding, but the Eagles aren't "one player away" from a Super Bowl. They're a team entering a new era under a young quarterback that needs to dedicate its time to finding out if the players they've added can play.

That means letting Isaac Seumalo take over one of the many positions he can play on the offensive line. It means giving Marcus Smith, who improved in 2016, more snaps and drafting cornerbacks and running backs instead of overpaying for stopgap veterans in free agency.

In several cases, these interests align with changes that will save the Eagles significant cap money and, in several cases, it's unfortunately at the expense of players who have been good, dependable and sometimes elite members of the team over recent years. But the kids deserve a chance, and it's providing that chance that will simultaneously free up the money for the Eagles to pursue a wide receiver like Jeffery.

Randall Cunningham always knew how to rock the Kelly green.

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76ers have no problem being patient with Okafor, waiting for perfect deal

The 76ers are not in any hurry to unload Jahlil Okafor, or anyone else for that matter.

ANDY JASNER
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For how much longer will Jahlil Okafor remain a Sixer? GETTY IMAGES

What's the rush?

Despite rampant speculation, the 76ers don't need to be in any particular hurry to trade any of their big men — Jahlil Okafor, Nerlens Noel or Richaun Holmes.

Joel Embiid isn't going anywhere. Except future All-Star games if he stays healthy.

ESPN.com reported that Alexis Ajinca and a potential future first-round draft pick was in the mix for Okafor, the No. 3 overall pick in the 2015 NBA Draft. Okafor has clearly been a trade chip all season with the emergence of Embiid, Noel, Holmes and even rookie Dario Saric.

It basically comes down to one thing: Which big men can coexist better with Embiid?

The Embiid-Okafor experiment of playing together hasn't worked well. Okafor is a low-post player who needs the ball. Noel doesn't need the ball to score, plus he's a rim protector. The same goes for Holmes, who is active on both ends of the court and provides a boost of energy.

Okafor tends to go through long stretches without rebounding. He struggles against bigger and quicker players on defense.

Okafor, who won a state championship in high school and a national title as a freshman at Duke, has the ability to be a solid player in the league for many years to come. If he's upset, the visible anger isn't there. Not that long ago, Noel voiced his displeasure with his lack of playing time.

When Bryan Colangelo took over for Sam Hinkie, he inherited a glut of big men. Finding playing time and building chemistry for all of them was bound to be difficult.

Considering the circumstances, the Sixers have done quite well.

"I really just am very proud of our team," Sixers coach Brett Brown said. "It's a very close team. They coexist just fine. You have an incredible real-time, real-life situation that our bigs are going through and trying to navigate all that. They do it with class and they do it with maturity and they do it with tremendous friendship. I really enjoy and respect this team that I'm coaching."

The trade deadline is inching closer. There's no need to move swiftly with any trade. It has to be the right move.

Okafor? Noel? Holmes? If the deal helps the Sixers, Colangelo will surely push for it.

At 18-33, and just completing a four-game road losing streak on the most recent trip, the Sixers aren't going to be competing in the finals this season. Or next season. The program, as Brown likes to call it, is being built. It takes time.

As the trade rumors continue to swirl, fans will clamor for the team to do something. Dangling Okafor to the Pelicans sounds appealing. There should be no rush.

The deal must be perfect.

When will Embiid return? Simmons make debut?

Sixers fans have been a very patient bunch. GETTY IMAGES

Joel Embiid hasn't played since January 27. Ben Simmons hasn't played since … summer league.

But according to NBA.com, the two have been working together and practicing all week long at the Sixers' South Jersey practice facility while their teammates have been mired in a four-game losing streak during a recent road trip.

"I'm glad that we were able to create an environment for both Ben and Joel back in Philadelphia," head coach Brett Brown told NBA.com. "We've got great resources, great people, and it's moving in the direction that we want."

The Sixers return home to host the San Antonio Spurs on Wednesday. Will Embiid be back? And is No. 1 overall pick Simmons any closer to suiting up and making his NBA debut?

The official injury report for the Spurs game won't come out until Wednesday afternoon, but all signs and courses indicate that Embiid will be back on the floor for the first time this month after missing four games with a knee injury.

As for Simmons, Brown wouldn't ponder to make a guess, but the last concrete information on Simmons' rehab and recovery saw him getting a complete clean bill of health on his surgically repaired foot. Reports have come out that he's been practicing with higher and higher capacity with the team and it has been suggested that he could make his NBA debut not long after next weekend's NBA All-Star break. EVAN MACY

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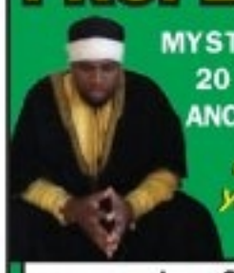

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Real World Externships with each program
Career Placement Assistance
ACCSC Accreditation

OIC PHILADELPHIA Opening opportunities for all

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Culinary Arts
16 weeks

Guestroom/Environmental Services
(Housekeeping)
9 weeks

Front Desk Operations
Front Office-9 weeks

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Start Date: Monday, Mar. 6, 2017 (Application Deadline – March 1, 2017)
Class Days & Time: Monday – Friday 8:30am – 2:45pm
Contact: Mrs. Council-Grant, Recruiter 215-236-7700 (ext. 325)
Location: 1231 N. Broad Street, 4th Floor Philadelphia, PA 19122
www.philaoic.org

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- Must bring a Valid State ID (school ID not permitted)
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- Must apply at OIC Monday – Friday from 9am – 2pm
- TABE Testing Administered on site
- Must be able to adhere to our professional dress code policy if accepted to participate, which consists of black dress slacks or skirt, white dress shirt/blouse, black or dark color tie and blazer, black non-slip shoes (uniform starts the day of orientation)
- Must provide OIC with three written references at orientation (non-family members)
- NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY (PLEASE DO NOT BRING CHILDREN)

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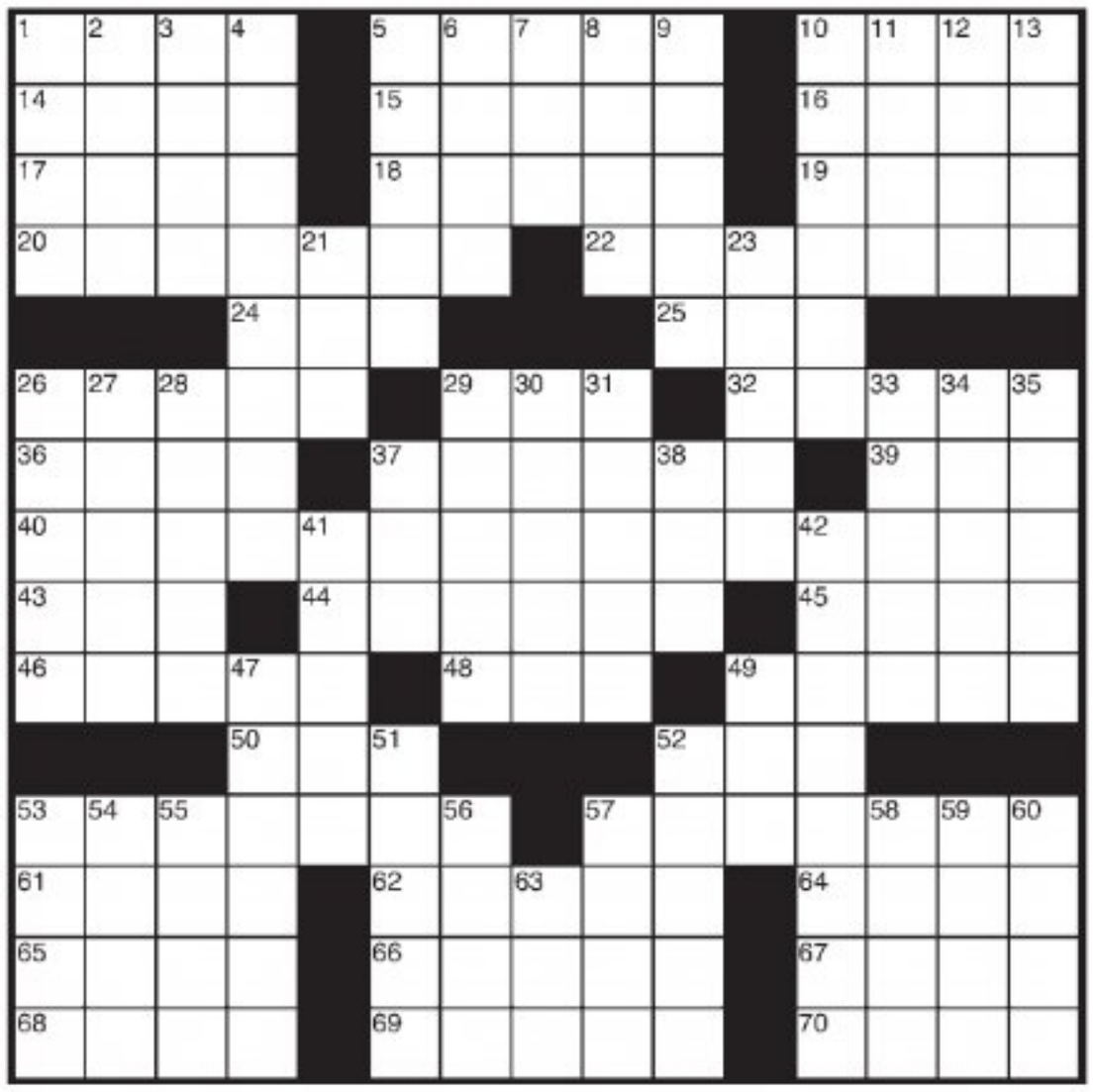
Across
1 Happy hour sites
5 Pack animals
10 Bad cut
14 Novelist – Waugh
15 Oven emanation
16 Long-active volcano
17 Bryce Canyon state
18 DeMille of epics
19 Shaquille O'–
20 Oz girl
22 Court decisions
24 Buckeye sch.
25 Width of a cir.
26 Reeked
29 Place for a pint
32 Animal that hisses
36 Ocean motion
37 Pina –
39 Bad-mouth
40 Difficult problem (5 wds.)
43 Louis XIV, e.g.
44 Opening remarks
45 Dublin's locale
46 Fruit-stand buy
48 Honshu honorific
49 Pitch
50 Mermaid's domain
52 Dot in the Seine
53 Strikingly
57 Roofed-in galleries
61 Peter Gunn's girl
62 Shove off
64 Deep tracks
65 Koh-i- – diamond
66 Of durable wood
67 Falling-out
68 Afflictions
69 Vestige
70 Lampreys

Down
1 Modem-speed unit
2 Low voice
3 Caboose's spot
4 Tall beer glass
5 – Picchu
6 Heavy hydrogen discoverer
7 Rapper Tone –
8 Kuwaiti leader
9 "Cheers" in Chihuahua
10 Warm and friendly
11 Nefertiti's god
12 Ruin a nylon
13 Greer and Roach
21 Naughty, naughty!
23 Spring fragrance
26 Throng
27 Nevada lake
28 Be of benefit
29 Acts sullen
30 UHF part
31 Twirler's gear
33 Robin of balladry
34 Tinier than mini
35 Lopsided
37 "The Situation Room" network
38 Two, in Tijuana
41 Ate elegantly
42 Drill
47 Willow shoots
49 RNs provide it
51 Ration
52 Dancing Castle
53 Start of a famous boast
54 Goddess's statue
55 Strad
56 Century unit
57 With, in Paris
58 Cat's-paw
59 Etc. kin (2 wds.)
60 Mach 1 breakers
63 APB datum



metro.us/sudoku

easy

8		2		4		1		9
3					2	7		
7	6				3			
		1					2	8
			8		4			
6	2					5		
			6				9	4
		6	2					7
2		7		1		3		5

hard

6			1				9	
							1	3
	1	3	2		9	6		4
5		1						
3	9			4			6	7
						4		1
1		4	7		6	9	3	
2	3							
	7				5			8

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Emotions will be difficult to control. Overreacting or doing something impulsive will cause problems within important relationships. Think before you speak.

Taurus Get together with friends or relatives or do something that will inspire you to begin a creative project. Don't let uncertainty interfere with your beliefs or lifestyle.

Gemini Think before you take on too much or let your emotions interfere with an important matter. Don't feel that you have to part with your cash to impress someone.

Cancer You'll be impulsive and excessive if you let your emotions take control. Separate yourself from any situation that may cost you emotionally, financially or physically.

Leo Refuse to let anyone upset you. Emotions will get in the way of good judgment. Stay focused on yourself and being the best you can be. Charm will help you.

Virgo Emotions must be dealt with sensibly. You can feel sorry for someone, but don't take on problems that don't belong to you, or you will be blamed for meddling.

Libra A change of plans will play in your favor. If you take the path of least resistance, you will have time left over to spend enjoyably with a loved one.

Scorpio Step outside your comfort zone. You will discover something interesting about who you are and what you are capable of doing. Don't hesitate to experiment.

Sagittarius If you put some muscle behind the changes you want to make at home, you will accomplish them. Emotional interference will arise if you go over budget.

Capricorn Uncertainty must not be allowed to lead you into a vulnerable situation. Face whatever comes your way head-on, so that you can go about your business.

Aquarius Refuse to get caught up in someone else's dilemma. Acknowledge what others do, but proceed down a path that will ensure your happiness and success.

Pisces Offer to help others, you will create good karma. What you put out, you will get back. Kindness and consideration will suffice, so don't be indulgent. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

D	E	S	K			F	O	G		V	I	A	L	
A	S	H	E	S		H	E	R	O		O	L	L	A
S	A	I	N	T		A	N	O	N		L	I	V	Y
H	U	M	O	R	I	N	G		E	N	T	A	I	L
				E	N	D		S	A	O		D	N	A
P	A	C	M	A	N		B	O	W	I	E			
R	U	B	I	K		S	U	G	A	R	C	O	A	T
O	D	E	S		P	O	R	G	Y		O	N	C	E
V	I	R	T	U	A	L	L	Y		F	L	Y	N	N
			S	P	R	A	Y		B	L	I	X	E	N
S	O	S		O	A	R		P	E	A				
E	X	P	A	N	D		A	L	T	I	T	U	D	E
M	I	R	Y		I	N	F	O		L	I	N	E	D
I	D	E	E		S	E	A	T		S	E	D	A	N
S	E	E	S		E	A	R			S	O	F	A	

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